

## GLOSSARY OF LIBRARY TERMS AND ACRONYMS

**AACRII:** Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, used as a standard for cataloging procedures and decisions in most libraries and revised periodically.

**ACCESS:** The availability of library and information services to any personal user. Access is complicated by such things as architectural barriers, illiteracy, and inadequate physical plants.

**ACCREDITED LIBRARY SCHOOL:** A school teaching library and information science at the master's degree level that has qualified for accreditation under requirements of the American Library Association.

**ACQUISITIONS:** The process of selecting and procuring books, periodicals, and other materials by purchase, exchange, and gift; of processing invoices for payment; and of keeping the necessary records of these acquired items.

**ADA:** Americans with Disabilities Act, a comprehensive and complex act of Congress passed in 1990. The act is intended to eliminate discrimination against the disabled. Title III deals with access to public accommodations including libraries. ADA also deals with employment practices.

**ALA:** American Library Association, the national professional organization.

**ALAWON:** *American Library Association Washington Office Newsletter.*

**ALTA:** American Library Trustees Association, a division of ALA.

**AUTOMATION:** Application of computers and other technology to library operations and services.

**A-V:** Audiovisual. Communication resources that rely on a device for transmission, reproduction, or enlargement to be fully utilized (e.g., films, records, cassettes, compact discs). Print and print substitutes are excluded.

**BAR CODE:** Vertical bar patterns representing numbers or letters, that can be read by electronic hardware and software. Used for inventory control, tracking, and identification of materials. Also used in library circulation systems for checking out materials to patrons.

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL:** The uniform identification of items of recorded information in various media and the availability of a mechanism for gaining subsequent access to such information.

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTION:** The process whereby library staff members teach users to develop independent skills in using the library and to gain access to information. Activities include tours and orientation to the library's services, arrangement, and materials; instruction in using the catalog and reference tool; and instruction in using technology.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** A complete or selected list of print or nonprint materials on a particular subject or by a particular author.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** The governing board of a public library.

**BOOKMOBILE:** Usually a van, bus, or station wagon filled with a collection of library materials that are used in areas where there are no libraries or limited library facilities.

**BRANCH LIBRARY:** An auxiliary library with separate quarters, a permanent basic collection of books, a permanent staff, and a regular schedule under the administration of the central library.

**CALL NUMBER:** Letters and numbers indicating the location of a book or other material, usually composed of the classification number and the author's last initial.

**CATALOG:** A listing of books, periodicals, maps, etc., arranged in a definite order and serving as a guide to the material found in the library. Common formats include card, book, microform, or online.

**CATALOGING:** The process of preparing a catalog or entries for a catalog. This includes the classification and assignment of subject headings for books and materials and determining all points of access to the record.

**CD-ROM:** Compact Disc-Read Only Memory, a medium for storing data electronically. Alternative to printed hardcopy directories, encyclopedias, and online databases.

**CE:** Continuing Education.

**CENSORSHIP:** The act of attempting to prohibit or restrict access to materials or information.

**CENTRAL OR MAIN LIBRARY:** Headquarters of a city, county, or regional system.

**CENTRALIZED CATALOGING:** The preparation of catalog records for libraries at diverse locations by a central department or agency.

**CERTIFICATION:** The process whereby the holder of a master's degree from an ALA-accredited graduate school of library science is issued a certificate to practice as a professional librarian in the commonwealth of Virginia. The Library Board is the authorized agency for the certification of librarians in Virginia.

**CIRCULATION:** The activity of a library in lending books and other materials to borrowers and keeping a record of such loans.

**CLASSIFICATION:** A systematic scheme for the arrangement of books and other material according to subject or form. The two most common systems in use in the United States are the Dewey Decimal and the Library of Congress classifications.

**COLLECTION:** A group of library materials having a common characteristic, such as Juvenile Collection, Reference Collection, Pamphlet Collection, etc. The term may also refer to the aggregate of the library's entire holdings.

**COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT:** The process for selecting library materials to meet a library's needs, goals, objectives, and priorities, as well as developing criteria for removing items no longer needed for the collection.

**COMPUTER PROGRAM:** A sequence of instructions that causes a computer to complete a desired task.

**CONFIDENTIAL RECORD:** Records prohibited from public disclosure because access to information may cause harm or embarrassment to the state, its citizens, or other individuals or organizations. Includes information exempt from disclosure under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), proprietary information, protected business data, and other information as outlined in agency or locality policies, directives, or regulations.

**CONSORTIUM:** A formal or informal association of libraries or other organizations having the same or interrelated objectives.

**COPYRIGHT:** A legal way to protect ownership of a creative work by the artist, writer, or photographer who made it. Provides the copyright owner the exclusive right to authorize reproduction or other uses of the work for a specific period of time.

**DATA:** A term for facts, numbers, letters, or symbols describing an object, idea, situation, etc.

**DATABASE:** A large compilation of information that can be immediately accessed and operated on by a computer data-processing system. Any organized collection of data, gathered and stored in a computer.

**DATA PROCESSING:** The systematic manipulation of data by a machine resulting in a desired arrangement of information.

**DISASTER PLAN:** A document that outlines a systematic and planned response to safeguard records and other materials from potential disasters (floods, fire, earthquakes, etc.). Identifies most valuable and vulnerable parts of collection and provides method for removal and recovery of materials. Disaster planning is the physical act of gathering information, identifying resources, outlining resources, outlining responsibilities, and formulating plans in response to possible disasters.

**DISTANCE EDUCATION:** Conducting educational activities across geographical space where the teacher and students are not in the same location. Can be delivered via television, correspondence, radio, Internet, etc. Emphasis is on increasing opportunities by overcoming barriers of geography, personal or work commitments, and conventional course structures.

**DOCUMENT DELIVERY:** The provision of a required item to a user. Originally the physical supply of a book or journal. Now also includes delivery by photocopy, fax, E-mail, and other electronic means.

**E-MAIL:** Electronic mail—the sending of messages from one location to another using computers and electronic communications channels; an on-line messaging service between computer users.

**FAIR USE:** Provision of the copyright law stipulating the allowable and legal use of short passages of copyrighted material without permission, for instance, as quotations in a magazine or book.

**FAX:** Facsimile transmission—sending an image (picture or page of text), usually on paper, from one point to another by electronic means.

**FIRSTSEARCH:** A cooperative program sponsored by the Library of Virginia that provides access to numerous online databases and indexes.

**FOIA:** Freedom of Information Act for Virginia—State law requiring public records be open for inspection by interested parties (see §2.1-340 of the *Code of Virginia*). Exempt Records are those that have been exempted from public disclosure under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

**FOLUSA:** Friends of Libraries-USA.

**FTE:** Full-time equivalent.

**FULL FUNDING FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES:** The amount of money authorized by state law for support of public libraries.

**FY:** Fiscal Year.

**GOAL:** A general aim or direction developed in response to a library's mission that is qualitative and abstract, long-term in nature, and convertible into manageable, measurable objectives.

**GOVERNING BODY:** The board or council that governs a local government unit.

**GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT:** Any publication originating in, or issued with the imprint of, or at the expense and by the authority of, any office of a legally organized governmental organization.

**GROUP ACCESS:** OCLC's group resource-sharing program. In Virginia primarily used by libraries that are not full OCLC members for searching and interlibrary loan. The Library of Virginia acts as the referral agent for Virginia Group Access libraries by initiating ILL requests for items that cannot be located with the group.

**HARDWARE:** The physical equipment in a data-processing system.

**HOME PAGE:** The first page a user sees at an Internet Web site.

**INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM:** The ability to pursue any idea or expression to its limits. Freedom of inquiry.

**INTERLIBRARY COOPERATION:** Two or more libraries agree to share library materials, staff, or facilities in an attempt to improve each individual library's services.

**ILL:** Interlibrary loan—a cooperative arrangement among libraries by which one library may borrow materials from another library. Also refers to a loan of library materials by one library to another.

**ISBN:** International Standard Book Number—a unique reference number assigned to each book by the Library of Congress, which is used for cataloging and procuring materials.

**INTERNET:** An international system of computer networks through which libraries and others may communicate and share information via electronic mail, databases, and other methods.

**JOBBER:** A company that sell products from many producers and publishers.

**KEYWORD:** A significant word in a database entry that can be used to recall the entry on demand.

**LAN:** Local Area Network—a network that operates within a limited geographic area, typically within a building or group of buildings.

**LC:** Library of Congress.

**LJ:** *Library Journal*, a trade publication for all interested in libraries.

**LSTA:** Library Services and Technology Act, enacted in 1996 as the successor to the Library Services and Construction Act. The title of federal legislation under which Congress appropriates money for library use. Its primary focus is to improve library services through technology, to encourage sharing resources, and to target library and information services to underserved people.

**LVA:** Library of Virginia.

**MARC:** Machine Readable Cataloging. A standard format for computer data about library materials, originated by the Library of Congress. MARC records facilitate information sharing and reduce the need for individual libraries to prepare original cataloging for common acquisitions.

**MICROFORM:** Greatly reduced images of a printed page copied on photographic film, which can be enlarged for reading on special projection machines. Microforms are used to conserve space and deter pilferage.

**MICROFICHE:** Refers to sheet film.

**MICROFILM:** Refers to roll film.

**MISSION:** Overall or basic purpose, the primary reason for existence. A mission statement is generally expressed in abstract terms and communicates the library's purpose to internal and external constituencies. The statement should explain what the library does, differentiate it from other organizations, and provide guidance for related subsequent planning activities such as the development of goals, objectives, and strategies.

**MLS:** Master's Degree in Library Science. The graduate professional degree in library science. Also called MSLS, MSLIS, MALS.

**MODEM:** Modulator/Demodulator—a device that transmits computer data to and receives it from a transmission line. There must be two modems—one at either end of a transmission line—for computers to communicate.

**NCLIS:** National Commission of Library and Information Science.

**NEH:** National Endowment for the Humanities.

**NETWORK:** A group of computers that are interconnected to allow the exchange of data or information and the sharing of software, printers, modems, etc.

**NLW:** National Library Week. Sponsored by the American Library Association annually in April.

**NONRESIDENT:** A person who resides outside the taxing area of a public library.

**OBJECTIVE:** A specific expected outcome as a result of certain actions. Usually stated in terms of what is to be done for or by whom, in what length of time, and to what standard of performance.

**OCLC:** Online Computer Library Center. A national shared cataloging data-service.

**ONLINE SYSTEM:** A system by which the terminals and other data collection and displaying devices are connected directly to the computer, enabling immediate and constant access to the database.

**OPAC:** Online Public Access Catalog—an automated library catalog directly available to users. The OPAC contains the library's catalog of bibliographic records and usually provides a variety of other features and information such as circulation status and periodical check-in records. The OPAC often provides access to other online resources and services made available to users by the library.

**OUTPUT MEASURE:** The result of the collection, analysis, and organization of objective, quantitative data.

**OUTREACH:** Programs and activities that extend beyond the library building. Examples include service to nursing homes, jails, and other correctional facilities; bookmobile service and books-by-mail service to geographically remote areas; and service to the homebound.

**PAC:** Public Access Catalog—an electronic “card catalog” for the public.

**PERIODICAL:** Magazine, newspaper, or other material normally issued at regular intervals. Each issue is numbered consecutively and/or dated.

**PLA:** Public Library Association, a division of the American Library Association.

**PLANNING FOR LIBRARY EXCELLENCE:** Published in 1988 by the Library of Virginia. Recommended goals and guidelines are provided to assist public libraries in planning at the local level for library services. *Planning for Library Excellence* is currently being revised.

**PRIVACY-PROTECTED ACT OF 1976:** State law governing the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of personal information ( §2.1-377 of the *Code of Virginia*).

**PRIVACY-PROTECTED RECORDS:** Records containing personal information that are protected from improper disclosure by the Privacy Protection Act.

**PROCESSING:** The carrying out of the various routines before material is ready for circulation, including cataloging and physical preparation.

**PUBLIC LIBRARY:** A library supported mainly by local taxes and open to all users.

**PUBLIC RECORDS ACT, VIRGINIA:** State law governing the procedures used to manage, preserve, and destroy public records of the Commonwealth, its agencies, and localities (see §42.1-76 of the *Code of Virginia*).

**READY REFERENCE:** A part of reference service concerned with questions of a factual nature which can be answered quickly, often from dictionaries, almanacs, directories and other standard sources.

**REALIA:** Art objects, games, paintings, toys, and similar items circulated by some libraries.

**RECIPROCAL BORROWING:** An arrangement by which a person registered at one library may borrow books and other library materials in person from another library.

**REFERENCE SERVICE:** A library's activity in seeking to locate and supply specific information requested by library users and in assisting patrons to use the resources of the library.

**REGIONAL LIBRARY:** A public library serving more than one political subdivision.

**RETROSPECTIVE CONVERSION:** The conversion of previously cataloged library materials to machine (computer) readable form.

**RFP:** Request for Proposal—A document requesting potential suppliers to submit proposals to sell goods or services at a proposed price. Also called a request for bid. Usually the RFP contains detailed specifications of the goods or services wanted.

**SCHEV:** State Council of Higher Education in Virginia.

**SELA:** Southeastern Library Association.

**SELECTION:** The process of choosing the books and other materials to be bought by a library.

**SERIAL:** An item that is published in successive parts and intended by the producer to continue indefinitely. Can be issued at predictable or irregular intervals and usually carries numerical or chronological designations.

**SERVER:** A computer system which provides services such as electronic mail routing, database sharing, or file transfer to local or remote users.

**SINKING FUND:** A fund established for the purpose of defraying the costs of acquiring large expenditure items, such as bookmobiles.

**SNUAB:** State Networking Users Advisory Board.

**SOFTWARE:** The programs required in order for the computer to produce desired results.

**SOLINET:** Southeastern Library Network. Includes more than 770 libraries in 10 southeastern states. Provides member libraries access to computerized bibliographic data systems.

**STANDARDS FOR LIBRARIES:** Guidelines or criteria developed at state and national levels suggesting or requiring certain minima deemed essential for proper operation of libraries.

**STATE AID:** An item of state expenditure for strengthening and improving public libraries.

**STATE LIBRARY AGENCY:** In Virginia, the Library of Virginia—the library agency of the state, the archival agency of the Commonwealth, and the reference library at the seat of government. This agency is also charged by law to give direction and assistance to all public and institutional libraries.

**STRATEGIES:** Specific means or activities by which objectives are accomplished.

**SUMMER READING PROGRAM:** Special programs and materials offered to children by public libraries during the summer to promote reading and use of the library.

**TECHNICAL SERVICES:** Those services connected with purchasing, cataloging, binding, and preparing for library use materials added to a collection, and maintaining the collection with necessary repairs and renovation of all library materials.

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS:** Transmission and reception of data by electromagnetic means.

**TELNET:** Telecommunications Network---the procedures used to log in (or gain access to) remote computers on the Internet.

**TERMINAL:** Keyboard and monitor used to access data and programs stored on a mainframe or minicomputer system. Relies on the central processing unit of the mainframe or minicomputer to execute programs and process the information and cannot perform its own processing.

**UNION CATALOG:** A catalog listing the holdings of two or more libraries, generally established through cooperative effort; used especially for interlibrary loans.

**VA\$L:** Virginia Union List of Serials. A statewide database of periodical and serial holdings records. Coordinated by the Library of Virginia, VA\$L includes more than 270 Virginia libraries.

**VA.PEN:** Virginia Public Education Network.

**VEMA:** Virginia Educational Media Association.

**VENDOR:** A commercial or institutional distributor of products, a book wholesaler, or an owner of a computer database to which a library may subscribe.

**VERTICAL FILE:** A collection of pamphlets, clippings, and/or pictures kept in a filing cabinet and arranged for ready reference, generally by subject. Also called Pamphlet File or Information File.

**VIDEO CONFERENCING:** The transmission of conferences and special events through computer networks. Video cameras and microphones at the transmitting site, such as a classroom, capture the images and sounds. These are processed and digitized, packaged according to “protocols,” and then transferred over the Internet. A computer on the receiving end captures the stream of data, reassembles it into a digital signal, and then displays the signal on a TV monitor or large screen.

**VIRGINIA CENTER FOR THE BOOK:** A nonprofit organization (affiliated with the Library of Congress Center for the Book) that supports reading and book culture.

**VIRTUAL LIBRARY:** Library and information services are provided electronically, through networked document delivery and access, to users as if contained within the library building. Often used to refer to networked access to conventional library resources.

**VIVA:** Virtual Library of Virginia

**VLA:** Virginia Library Association.

**VLIN:** Virginia Library and Information Network. A cooperative library service program initiated by the Library of Virginia in 1993 that electronically links more than 2,600 staff members from more than 500 Virginia libraries to each other and to worldwide information.

**VPLDA:** Virginia Public Library Directors Association.

**WAN:** Wide Area Network. Any Internet or network that covers an area larger than a single building or campus. VLIN is a WAN.

**WEEDING:** The process of examining books, pamphlets, and various other materials and removing from the current collection those items that are out-of-date, obsolete, shabby, or unneeded duplicates.

**WHCLIS:** White House Conference on Library and Information Services.

**WWW:** World Wide Web. A menu system for finding and accessing resources on the Internet that gathers Internet resources from all over the world into a series of menu pages, or screens, that appear on a user’s computer.

**Z39.50:** A national standard defining a protocol for computer-to-computer information retrieval, which makes it possible for a user in one system to search and retrieve information from other computer systems without knowing the search syntax used by those other systems.